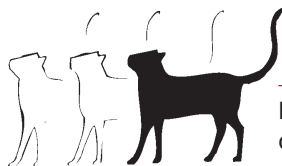


ORDINARY MIRACLES
A Training Package
to Foster Nurturing
Parent-Child Relationships
Facilitator Manual

Summer 2003

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*“If that wasn’t me [in the video] and that was
somebody else and their child, it would be like,
‘they’re doing the best that they can’.
It just makes me happy!”*

—Mother’s comment
in response to seeing
her child and herself on videotape

I can remember when we started this. Intellectually we knew that we needed to [build on family strengths] and we talked about it and talked about it and analyzed, and it was really hard to do. Once we started using videotape, it made those ordinary miracles fill up the work. All of a sudden we could stop and see all the ordinary, wonderful things that were happening between parent and child that we were missing because we were moving so fast. It gives us an opportunity to slow it down and SEE it.

—Sally Campbell, M.S.W.
Northern Virginia Family Service
Alexandria, Virginia

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	v
Introduction to the Training Package (Facilitator Manual and Videos)	vi
Trainer Preparation Checklist.....	viii
Module I: The Parallel Process (The Soto Family)	
Narrative Overview	I-1
Module Goal and Objectives.....	I-2
Module Outline and Time Estimates	I-2
Training Materials for the Module	I-2
Module Procedure/Trainer Outline	I-4
PowerPoint Slides/masters for transparencies	slides I-1 through I-7
Handouts I-1 through I-10 (masters for reproduction)	I-12
Transcript of Soto Family Tape	I-32
Module I Expanded Trainer Notes	I-36
Module II: Parallel Partnerships (The Jenkins-Magarity Family)	
Narrative Overview	II-1
Module Goal and Objectives.....	II-2
Module Outline and Time Estimates	II-2
Training Materials for the Module	II-2
Module Procedure/Trainer Outline	II-4
PowerPoint Slides/masters for transparencies	slides II-1 a through II-6
Handouts II-1 through II-9 (masters for reproduction)	II-10
Transcript of Jenkins-Magarity Family Tape	II-25
Module II Expanded Trainer Notes	II-30
Module III: Supervision (The Jones-Hitch Family)	
Narrative Overview	III-1
Module Goal and Objectives.....	III-2
Module Outline and Time Estimates	III-2
Training Materials for the Module	III-2
Module Procedure/Trainer Outline	III-4
PowerPoint Slides/masters for transparencies	slides III-1 a through III-3b
Handouts III-1 through III-5 (masters for reproduction)	III-8
Transcript of Jones-Hitch Family Tape	III-13
Module III Expanded Trainer Notes	III-20
Module IV: Supporting Competent Families (The Galvez Family)	
Narrative Overview	IV-1
Module Goal and Objectives.....	IV-2
Module Outline and Time Estimates	IV-3
Training Materials for the Module	IV-2
Module Procedure/Trainer Outline	IV-4
PowerPoint Slides/masters for transparencies	slides IV-1 a through IV-2
Handouts IV-1 through IV-2 (masters for reproduction)	IV-9
Transcript of the Galvez Family Tape	IV-11
Evaluation Instrument	IV-15
Starting Early Starting Smart Sites and Contact Information	IV-19

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A Brief Introduction to the Training Package

Background

This “Ordinary Miracles” training package has been developed by the *Starting Early Starting Smart* (SESS) public-private knowledge development initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) and Casey Family Programs.

SESS programs provide integrated behavioral health services in community-based early childhood settings. The use of videotape to develop nurturing relationships between parents and young children is one of the promising innovations from the SESS experience. It is based on the work of Dr. Victor Bernstein of the University of Chicago, and was implemented in several of the *Starting Early Starting Smart* sites. (See Handouts I-9, I-10, and II-9 for Dr. Bernstein’s own presentation of the philosophy, practice, and principles of this strength-based process.)

The goal of the training is to prepare home visitors and their supervisors to nurture the development of strong parent-child relationships through the use of videotape in home visiting. SESS has packaged the training in replicable form to make this innovation widely available.

Training Package Design and Delivery

Package Elements. The physical training package is constituted of two videotapes and this Facilitator Manual, which includes a detailed trainer outline for each of the four training modules or sessions, PowerPoint slides or masters for overhead transparencies, masters for participant handouts, which include homework reading assignments, and a post-training evaluation instrument.

Training Activities. In addition to observation-practice activities related to the two videos, the training includes full-group discussion, small group activities, individual work with handouts, hands-on laboratory for practice in using video equipment, reading and field videotaping assignments, and group sharing of video homework products.

Audience. The training is designed for persons who work as home visitors and for supervisors of home visitors. Participant prerequisites include training/orientation for home visiting and knowledge of child growth and development, including some knowledge of attachment theory. Acquaintance with the strength-based philosophy is also desirable. The training itself assumes that participants have established, ongoing relationships with families in a home visiting program.

Trainer requirements. The trainer should have knowledge of home visiting and the “strength-based” approach to service delivery, as well as excellent group process skills. It is also desirable that the trainer is versed in child growth and development (especially attachment theory) and has experience in working with videotaping equipment. However, a lack of experience with the technical aspects of making videotapes can be compensated for with the assistance of an audiovisual technician. This is especially important for the laboratory portion of the second session. If the training group size exceeds six participants, it is desirable to have an additional facilitator for the laboratory and “video-sharing” activities in Modules II, III, and IV.

Training settings. The training is designed for delivery in settings where home visitors and their supervisors go for inservice or continuing education training. It is intended to augment—not replace—basic home visitor training.

Training group size. Optimum group size, 6 to 12 participants; more participants could be accommodated if there are additional facilitators for the laboratory and “video-sharing” activities, which are in 3 of the 4 training sessions.

Length of training. Approximately 12 hours’ duration (4 sessions of up to 3½ hours each). It is important that there be at least one week elapsed time between sessions.

Training Equipment. Newsprint and easel, projector for overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides, VCR and monitor, video camera with small portable playback monitor (for home visitors’ use in performing homework assignments).

Trainer Preparation Checklist

At least 1 month in advance of training:

- ☐ Establish a training team. (One facilitator is needed for every 6 participants in Modules III and IV. Audiovisual expertise required in Module II.)
- ☐ Set time, dates, place, and recruitment strategy for training delivery.
- ☐ Preview training facility for appropriateness of space for group size and training requirements (e.g., also see training equipment below).
- ☐ Prepare and disseminate recruitment notice/invitation for participants (home visitors and supervisors of home visitors).

At least 2 weeks in advance of training:

- ☐ Confirm availability of training equipment:
 - ☐ Overhead projector or laptop and projector for PowerPoint slides
 - ☐ Flipchart (easel and newsprint) and markers
 - ☐ VCR and monitor (ideally 27" or larger)
 - ☐ Video cameras (more than one camera may be required so that participants can rotate use and complete assignments between sessions)
- ☐ Begin study of trainer outlines, including careful preview of videos in conjunction with trainer outline and reading of participant handouts (including homework reading assignments).
- ☐ Plan session "icebreakers" to set the tone.
- ☐ Prepare participant notebooks:
 - ☐ Prepare participant agendas for each session (optional)
 - ☐ Photocopy handouts for each module/session (in Module I, complete the information for Handout I-4 before duplicating)
 - ☐ Photocopy slides (optional)

- ☐ Obtain a list of participant names and available background information.
- ☐ Reproduce overhead transparencies if laptop and projector are not available for PowerPoint slides.

Two days before:

- ☐ Confirm room and AV arrangements.
- ☐ Confirm readiness of participant notebooks.
- ☐ Confirm any arrangements for refreshments.

The day before:

- ☐ If you have access to the room, arrange the room setup. Try out your AV equipment if possible.
- ☐ Gather training supplies, including the easel pad, markers, tape, notebooks and pens for participants.
- ☐ Get a good night's rest!